

# PROCLAMATION

BY (the Mayor, City Council, etc)

**WHEREAS**, every 5 minutes, a child in Michigan is reported a victim of child abuse and neglect and over two-thirds of these victims are our most vulnerable populations, young children age six and under; and

**WHEREAS**, during periods of economic downturns, such as now, families are much more vulnerable and the incidence of abuse increases, across all segments of our society... with risk factors greater in families where the parent: *abuses alcohol or drugs, is isolated from their families or communities, has difficulty controlling anger or stress, appears uninterested in the care, nourishment or safety of their children, and/or seems to be having serious economic, housing or personal problems* and

**WHEREAS**, both state and nationally, child abuse is considered to be one of our nation's most serious public health problems. Scientific studies have documented the link between the abuse and neglect of children and a wide range of medical, emotional, psychological and behavioral disorders such as *depression, alcoholism, drug abuse, severe obesity, juvenile delinquency and the need for special education services*; and

**WHEREAS**, the human costs of this issue is almost incalculable, conservative estimates of the monetary costs of child abuse and neglect, both direct and indirect, cost our nation's taxpayers more than \$258 M dollars per day. This annually amounts to over \$1400 per American family for the consequences of abuse versus only \$1.06 spent on prevention.

**WHEREAS**, some of the warning signs that a child might be abused or neglected include: *nervousness around adults; aggression toward children or adults; inability to stay awake or concentrate for long periods; sudden dramatic changes in personality or activities; acting out sexually or showing interest in sex that is not age appropriate; frequent or unexplained bruises or injuries; low self-esteem; and poor hygiene* and;

**WHEREAS**, child abuse prevention is an acknowledged community responsibility. This month, and each thereafter, we ask you to help "TURN THE LIGHT ON PREVENTION" in communities throughout this state. You can support this April Child Abuse Prevention Month campaign by... 1) turning your porch lights on the first Sunday evening in April, raising awareness about the issue, 2) visibly wear and display blue ribbons in your community which symbolize child abuse prevention, 3) the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in April is Blue Sunday where the faith community commits to raising the issue of child abuse, 4) support your local Child Abuse Prevention Month activities, and finally, 5) each of us personally embrace the **5 R's of Keeping Children Safe...** and pledge to **...Raise** the issue, **Reach Out** to kids and parents in your community, **Remember** the risk factors, **Recognize** the warning signs, and **Report** suspected abuse or neglect; and

**WHEREAS**, we hold sacred the trust of our nation's most valuable resource, our children.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ do hereby proclaim the month of April, 2004 as

## CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

in the (city/county of \_\_\_\_\_), and call upon all citizens to join me in dedicating their energies to cherishing ( city/county) children and helping them grow and develop free from physical, emotional, and sexual harm.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the official seal of the (city/county) to be affixed on this 1<sup>st</sup> day of April, 2004

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